

**Remarks**

Currently pending are claims 1-3, 5-11 and 13-14. Claims 1 and 10 have been amended to include the limitations of claim 12. Claims 2, 5 and 13 have also been amended to particularly point out and clearly define Applicant's claimed invention. No new matter has been added. In view of the above amendments and following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration by the Examiner, and advancement of the application to allowance.

**35 U.S.C. § 112**

The Examiner rejected claims 2 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicant has amended claims 2 and 10 to further clarify the anionic dye as a Markush group.

The Examiner also rejected claims 5 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicant has amended claims 5 and 13 to further clarify how  $\epsilon$ -caprolactam is used. Accordingly, Applicant requests the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 be withdrawn.

**35 U.S.C. § 103**

The Examiner rejected claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lacroix et al. (US Pat. No. 6,511,535) in view of Karlinksi (US Pat. No. 5,940,099). Applicant traverses this rejection for the following reasons.

Lacroix et al. teach a method of printing textile fibre material with an aqueous ink having a viscosity from 1-40 mPA's at 25° C that generally comprises at least one anionic acid dye. The Examiner notes Lacroix et al. teach the viscosity of the ink is a result effective variable and therefore one would be able to optimize the viscosity through

routine experimentation. Upon further review, Lacroix et al. does teach that the viscosity of the ink can be adjusted to the specified range. However, it is through the use of natural or synthetic thickeners identified in col. 22, l. 63 to col. 23, l. 9 and not dipropylene glycol. Thus, Lacroix et al. does not recognize dipropylene glycol as a parameter which, when combined with the anionic acid dye, produces an ink having the desired viscosity; therefore, determining the amount of dipropylene glycol to use in ink-jet printing methods cannot be characterized as routine experimentation.

Moreover, while Lacroix et al. does teach that the ink may generally contain, among numerous other components, surfactants or humectants such as "urea, polyhydric alcohols, e.g. ethylene, diethylene, triethylene or tetraethylene glycol, 1,2-propylene glycol, dipropylene glycol, glycerol, and polyethylene glycols" it is also taught that the inks preferably contain "N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, diethylene glycol, glycerol, or 1,2-propylene glycol . . . in an amount of from 2 to 30% by weight . . ." *See U.S. Pat. No. 6,511,535* at col. 23, ll. 20-25 and col. 23, l. 66 to col. 24, l. 5. Thus, Lacroix et al. provides no teachings for any amount of dipropylene glycol or any reasonable expectation that the use of an ink containing an anionic acid dye in combination with 30-45% by weight of dipropylene glycol could even be successfully incorporated into its ink-jet printing method.

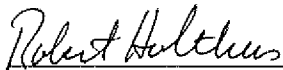
The Examiner has added Karlinski for the purpose of teaching ink-jet printing and ink-jet print heads. However, Karlinski provides no teaching or suggestion as to the type of inks which can suitably be used in its disclosed ink-jet print heads. Thus, the combination of Lacroix et al. and Karlinski does not render Applicant's claimed method obvious.

Additionally, Applicant has surprisingly found that an ink-jet printing method can be conducted with high reliability, even when running at high print speeds, to provide multicolor prints having excellent fastness properties when an aqueous ink comprising an anionic acid dye in combination with 30-45 wt. % of dipropylene glycol is utilized. In particular, as demonstrated in Examples 1-6, an aqueous ink comprising an anionic acid dye in combination with 30-45 wt. % of dipropylene glycol was successfully printed from an ink-jet head at high speeds and produced multicolor prints having good fastness properties. This is neither taught nor suggested in Lacroix et al. or Karlinski. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the rejections be withdrawn.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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